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THE  
ETON SYSTEM OF EDUCATION  
VINDICATED:  
AND  
ITS CAPABILITIES OF IMPROVEMENT  
CONSIDERED,  
IN REPLY TO SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

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If the force of custom, simple and separate, be great; the force of custom, copulate and conjoined and collegiate, is far greater. For there example teacheth, company comforteth, emulation quickeneth, glory raiseth: so as in such places the force of custom is in its exaltation. Certainly the great multiplication of virtues upon human nature, resteth upon societies well ordained and disciplined.—BACON, *Essay* xxxix.

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## VINDICATION,

*&c.*

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THE system of Education now pursued at Eton has, within a few months, become the subject of public discussion. When, indeed, it is considered that more than a hundred young men connected with all the higher classes of society annually leave the School, the system, by which the mental condition of so large and influential a body is determined, becomes a question of momentous importance. It has already been treated in two pamphlets, which profess to expose its imperfection and abuses. One, entitled "Some Remarks on the present Studies and Management of Eton School," is written with considerable ability, and among partial exaggerations and false conclusions, contains many just strictures, and suggests some useful alterations. I shall, however, endeavour to show that the remarks in general proceed on a mistaken view of the fundamental principles of Education, and I cannot but lament

the tone of intemperate, and uncharitable invective, pervading the publication, which equally injures and disgraces the cause of truth, and moral improvement. The second pamphlet, "Eton Abuses Considered," is written in so coarse a vein of vulgar calumny, that it is utterly unworthy the notice of the rational inquirer. It is evidently the work of a young person whose feelings are still embittered with the fancied indignities of some school-discipline, which, to judge from his tone of writing, may have been well deserved, though it certainly failed of its desired effect. The author should consider, that personal abuse is, under all circumstances, the last resort of hostile feeling; but in an anonymous pamphleteer it becomes the meanest refuge of private malice. I shall not, I hope, be accused of an unnecessary digression, if I so far notice this publication, as to reprobate and deplore the manner in which this person has presumed to discuss the character of Dr. Keate. That gentleman is now about to retire from a situation, the most arduous and responsible among all the duties of public life, to which, during the long period of twenty-five years, he has devoted his whole moral and intellectual energy. It is painful to every better feeling of humanity, that the name and character of this distinguished individual, should, at the close of his laborious career, be exposed to the boyish malignity of an anonymous libeller. I should



regret that such an attack had been made the base work of any one—that it is the work of an Etonian, is indeed a sad reflection.—If a stranger should doubt the moral tendencies of an Eton education, his objections would seem unanswerable, if he should point to this publication and ask, are these the principles and feelings that Eton teaches her sons? It were unnecessary, even if this were a worthy opportunity, to defend the character of Dr. Keate from such attacks as these. All the educated classes of Englishmen deeply feel, and willingly acknowledge, the debt of gratitude which is due to his exertions and transcendent merits. The profound and varied learning—the pure and refined taste—the unbending moral courage—the conscientious attention to the minutest points of duty—the benevolent though dignified intercourse with his elder pupils—these are the more peculiar features which have marked his character and conduct, and have ensured to him the affectionate reverence, and filial gratitude of the thousands who have grown up under his fatherly care.

It has been his great work to bring the moral discipline of the school under a regulated and wisely-ordered control, which has never been equalled or approached at any similar establishment; and he has advanced the established system of intellectual tuition to its highest possible perfection. That he has adhered too closely to an antiquated and defective system, is a common



subject of animadversion. He may not perhaps have introduced any fundamental changes ; though I could mention many improvements of great importance, which have been made under his superintendence. I would especially notice the existing arrangements for religious instruction, which have been within a few years entirely new-modelled and enlarged. If, however, it be admitted, that no radical changes have yet been introduced, it should in fairness be remembered, that the necessity for reformation has but lately appeared, and it were unreasonable to expect that any extensive alterations could be carried into effect at the close of a hard spent life, by one who was about to resign his office, and could not himself superintend the workings of a new system, which would be subject within a few years to the revision of his successor. It may be added, that a due justice to his successor would demand that the introduction of any important arrangements should be reserved for him, to whom, within so short a period, the adjustment and direction of them would be entrusted.

To return from this digression.—In offering the following remarks on the Eton system, it is not my object to suggest improvements, or to canvass the motives of individuals. I disclaim at once all purpose of interference in arrangements, which, when once the necessity of reformation is established, ought, both in justice

and in policy, to be entrusted to the responsible directors of the Establishment. Still more strongly do I disclaim all judgment on the principles and feelings of the individuals concerned. It is a sinful want of charity and humble wisdom to treat with scorn the conscientious scruples of men, whose responsibility for the discharge of their duties lies at a far higher tribunal than that of public opinion; and there is especial need of this wise reserve in the case of collegiate bodies, in which all measures of reform are attended with difficulties which the public, however it may presume to ridicule, cannot pretend to understand. I will beg to add, that it is still more dishonourable and unfair, to bring forward, with a pompous air of originality, as the invention of the writer, detailed plans of improvement, identical with those which are well known to have been already devised, and maturely considered, by the Eton authorities themselves. It may be, and in common charity, I would hope, that the author, to whom I allude, was not aware of this coincidence of his own views with those of the present directors of the School: but it is at least singular, considering his apparently-close acquaintance with the School, that he had never learnt this well-known fact. As I have good reason to believe, that such plans have long been under consideration, I should have deemed it both unnecessary and presumptuous, to bring the

subject under public notice, if it had not thus been already discussed in an unphilosophical, and unfair manner, which must tend to produce incorrect notions of the principles of education now acted upon, and unjust impressions of the motives of the directors. These objectors have, I conceive, taken a partial and narrow-minded view of its system. I shall not follow them into any unnecessary details: it will rather be my object to take a general survey of the present condition of the School, viewed according to its principles and proposed effects. The cause of truth and learning will thus be best advanced. The merits and defects of its system, as well as its capabilities of improvement, will thus be most fairly represented, and most clearly perceived.

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*Devotional Exercises.*

THE Eton Scholars are required to attend the public services of the Chapel on the Lord's Day, on Saints' Days, and on the common holidays. There are also private prayers every evening for the Scholars on the foundation, at which an English service has lately been introduced, instead of the old Latin forms. Private prayers on the evenings and mornings of Sunday, have also, within a short time, been established at all the different houses.

The custom of attendance at chapel on the common days of the week, especially as enforced at our Universities, has of late, in many quarters, become the subject of marked disapprobation ; indeed the question has been discussed with a levity and unmeasured censure, that ill befits its solemnity, and exhibits a total inattention to the nature of the blessings it is calculated to produce, and the possibilities of their operation. It is difficult to discover, with any accuracy, the real tenor of the objections. It is not, I believe, denied, that daily congregational worship is an essential part of discipline, as a restraint and correction for the wayward and unsettled spirits of youth ; and as the best means to enforce and sustain a religious sense ; nor can it be urged that the Church of England service, with its capabilities of expansion, and of adaptation to every tone and change of feeling, can by any degree of repetition become monotonous, or even uninteresting. Nor would such an abuse be more likely to arise, when the service is incorporated with the general routine of study. The only meaning of such objections can be, that a daily service, being now generally disused, is considered unnecessary, and, therefore, is not observed with feelings of devotion. That the custom is thus abused, and that its efficacy is thus, in many cases, impaired, cannot, indeed, be justly denied ; but it is

important to observe, that this abuse, so far as it is affected by external circumstances, in no degree arises from any evils incidental to the custom itself; but entirely from the singularity of the custom. It is well known that these forms of worship were practised by the universal Church in its earliest and purest days; that they formed the most essential part of all establishments of education, even when education was not confined to the Clergy. In this country, for a long period subsequent to the Reformation, they continued in general use; but after the great rebellion, this old and hallowed custom gradually declined. The rapidly increasing neglect was deeply lamented by Bishop Butler<sup>1</sup>, about the

<sup>1</sup> As an instance of the spirit and the sentiments that characterize the best of the two publications to which I have alluded, I extract one sentence on this subject, and will compare it with the opinion of this great and good man. The author of the 'Remarks' observes, that the continuance of the daily services is a "stupid and obstinate adherence to forms, whose single claim to respect consists in the longevity of their mischief." The more wise, and more Christian remark of Bishop Butler, in the passage referred to in the text, is as follows: "But a great part of this is neglected by the generality amongst us; for instance, the Service of the Church, not only upon common days, but also upon saints' days, and several other things might be mentioned. Thus they have no customary admonition, no publick call to recollect the thoughts of God and Religion from one Sunday to another." *Charge to the Clergy of Durham*. 1751.



middle of the last century. It has now fallen into total disuse. The form is still retained in many favoured places ; but the power of daily worship has departed from the land. When young persons, then, perceive that these observances are not practised by society, and are not enforced at their own homes, there is a tendency to regard the custom as a superfluous, because an unusual, form ; and as nothing more than a part of college discipline. It is from this comparison of the habits of the world around them, with the peculiar practices of their college, that these principles of irreverence are engendered. If the practice were continued at their own homes, the service of the common day would be regarded with the same reverence as the service of the Sabbath. But can any one seriously argue from thence the propriety of a discontinuance of this custom in these its chief strongholds, and which, if abolished there, will be lost to our country without hope of recovery ? While the engrossing principles of worldly business have made desolate our parish Churches, let us at least hold sacred, as the last asylums of the ancient institutions of religion, our seats and schools of learning. That man is not to be envied, whose heart does not turn with love and reverence to those collegiate chapels, where alone in our land, the God to whom the eyes of all look up for their daily bread, receives his daily offering of public

praise and thanksgiving. These are forms endeared to every Christian, as a demonstrative part of that traditionary evidence, on which his whole religion rests. They are the links that bind us to past times, and to modes of life which are no more. They realize to our senses the habits of devotion that prevailed in Christendom, when religion was all in all. They are the standing memorials, and visible proofs of the deep, heartfelt impressions, that Christianity wrought in the world when it was first preached. But it is not merely from its historical interest, that I advocate the sacred importance of this custom. The object proposed at our Schools of learning, by an observance of these forms, is to habituate the minds of our youth to the regular practice of social worship, and to train them up with a sense of the beauty and necessity of a daily communion with their Creator.

The question is, whether or not this effect is generally produced. I now allude particularly to our Universities, for there are circumstances connected with the Eton system, to be presently considered, which render it less worthy of unqualified approbation. It is indeed most difficult to speak with any certainty on such a subject; but, as far as the experience of an individual may warrant a decision, I would unhesitatingly assert, that, in a majority of cases, this custom, though unsupported and unsanctioned by society, is attended



with most salutary effects. Even among those who treat the service of the common day with formality and careless disrespect, there is an effectual though a casuistical distinction drawn between the duties of the week-day and the Sabbath, which preclude the desecration of the latter, and prevents any evil consequences. I greatly doubt whether, even in such cases, any permanent distaste for devotion is produced by these observances. But among minds of a purer tone, such as are found in the far greater number of young persons, where the religious affections are ardent though unsettled, and the sense of moral dependence is strong, though undefined, there are agencies forced into operation by this custom, which must be of the most essential benefit. The summons to chapel at the commencement and the close of every day—the recurring consciousness of the sacred duty—the constant representation of their dependence upon their Maker—the contrast of the devout ceremony and its solemn warnings, with the scene and the conversation which may have just been left—the harmony of these religious musings with the quiet studies of the day—the support and direction afforded to the transient and wavering aspirations after better things—these are influences so congenial to all our purer feelings, so beneficially associated with the general training of young minds, that their effects can be destroyed or impaired only by some unnatural perverseness or insensibility.

Such I conceive to be the operation of the Chapel system at our Universities, and on such grounds they should be ever supported ; but there are distinguishing peculiarities in the system pursued at Eton, which materially lessen the probability that similar effects will be produced. It is not there, as at the Universities, a service that commences and closes each successive day, composed of a short and appropriate form of prayer, and incorporated with the daily routine of college business—circumstances to which I would attribute the beneficial workings of the system—but an occasional and variable service, during the course of the day, without any appropriate meaning, considered only as the marks of a holiday or day of indulgence, and apparently enforced only as an useful occupation in the place of school-times. The service, moreover, is not suited to the occasion, being a repetition of the entire service of the Church, which is evidently too long and too comprehensive for a daily office, and which, from its very nature, is not adapted to the capacities of the far greater number of the scholars. It has been remarked by Archbishop Whateley, that our Liturgy is not adapted or designed for children. It may at least be affirmed that our public orders of prayer, from their length and composition, are not suited, as daily offices, for persons of the early age within which the majority of the scholars may be classed. Our Liturgy, together with the portions of Scripture

appointed to be read, is to be viewed as an epitome of the principles, the feelings, and the studies of a whole Christian life. It is impossible for boys to sustain their attention throughout so general and extensive a service, so frequently repeated, or to adapt their thoughts to the changes of its various parts. When the power of application is thus lost, formality and weariness of spirit necessarily arises; and there is extreme danger lest the impressions, which might otherwise be produced by the occasional use of this service, be thus impaired, or altogether destroyed. The only mean which can be devised to counteract the tendencies to insensibility and lip-service, is the daily use of a form of prayer entirely within their comprehension, and in constant accordance with their feelings and habits of study. By the observance, however, of a form, which is neither in its external circumstances connected with their daily business, nor in its matter harmonized to their mental capacities, and which from its irregularity and want of propriety loses all the force of association, we cannot reasonably expect any permanent blessings, nor perhaps even temporary respect or devotion. There is, without doubt, an inefficiency and a want of real devotion in the services of the common-day, which must, I conceive, be attributed to these defective peculiarities of the system. I entirely dissent from those who would trace these lamentable effects to the very custom of daily congregational prayer. I

consider that this custom, if appropriately observed, may become of essential benefit in the training up of a child, nay more, that it is the most effectual means to implant and mature a sense both of his true dependence on his Maker, and of his brotherly connexion with his fellow Christians. These impressions, to be permanently fixed in our moral being, or rather, to be produced at all, must be made a compulsory part of our daily existence; and this can be effected only by an appropriate observance of this custom. While, therefore, I willingly admit the necessity of an alteration in the system now pursued at Eton, I deny the propriety of its total abolition. The change required is, to adjust the forms and times of prayer to the capacities of the scholars and the daily routine of business, in such a manner as to make the observance preparatory to the more advanced principles of the University system. It will not, I hope, be considered irrational or presumptuous, if I suggest, in case of any alteration, the adoption of regular morning and evening prayers, at which the office to be used should be arranged expressly for the occasion. The evening prayers now in use among the scholars on the Foundation, might become the model on which such a system could be framed. The details of such a plan, and its incorporation with the daily business, would require mature deliberation, and, probably, there are objections to the scheme, or difficulties in its appli-



cation, which I do not foresee. The proposal, however, may be reasonably supported, as an adaptation of the religious discipline of our greatest public school to that of our Universities, independently of the real benefits which might be fairly expected from the change, but which the present custom avowedly fails to produce.

Under this head, I would notice, as an important defect, the constant recurrence of occasional and periodical holidays, accompanied with the remission of the regular exercises. These observances are peculiar to Eton, and have arisen from the connection of the School with the Court, and the Collegiate body. They are most objectionable, as the fluctuations of severe labour and comparative idleness are inconsistent with the formation of regular and sustained habits of study. They are probably retained from an idea of the benefits of temporary relaxation. It is an experienced fact, however, that such indulgence is more detrimental to the mental energies, than the most severe application, for it is a common remark, that in the weeks of easiest business worse exercises are composed than in the harder weeks. Under the regular course of business a boy is perhaps overworked, and therefore an entire abolition of these indulgences may not be desirable. Some plan of compensation, which would equalize the present average quantity of business on a regular scale, would be most beneficial. Such an

equalized distribution would moreover materially lighten the labours of the Masters, an additional object of great moment.

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*Religious Instruction.*

THE neglect of this vital part of education has been severely charged upon Eton. Till within a few years the accusation has been justly deserved. With equal truth, however, this charge may, during the same period, have been laid against our Universities, and every public establishment of education. In noticing the defects of Eton, this fact ought in fairness to be remembered, for the neglect originated not from any causes peculiar to this or any other institution, but from circumstances that affected our whole social system. The reader needs not to be reminded of the general disrepute into which religious knowledge fell in this country after the Restoration. The exhaustion consequent upon high religious excitement, the bitter experience of the horrors of controversy, the ridicule attached to all pious enthusiasm, the laxity of morals, and the Deistical principles introduced from abroad, the increasing interest of natural science, all concurred at this period to produce a distaste and contempt for the study of divinity. This perversion of the public

mind increased to a dreadful extent during the eighteenth century. It was to be expected that our seats and schools of learning would be affected by the condition of the public mind. The disregard of revealed truth manifested by society, would necessarily superinduce a neglect of its study. It arose from no defect in their institutions ; there was no deficiency in their plans of instruction, but the workings of their system were completely impaired by the insensibility that universally prevailed. There could be no religious teaching where there was no felt necessity for religious knowledge. There is a remarkable proof of the low state of theological pursuits, during this dark age, in the history of the enactments of Oxford. It was found necessary, during this period, to provide by statute, that the subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, required on taking the Bachelor's degree, which had become a mere form, should be accompanied by a declaration, that the party believed the whole of these Articles to be agreeable to the word of God. And as an additional security, it was also required that the scholar, "during his undergraduate state, should be thoroughly instructed in the Articles in which he was about to declare his belief." The impulse produced at first by this measure soon died away. The scholar continued to subscribe, and declare his belief, but the intermediate instruction was gradually dropped, or



degenerated again into empty form, in all the Colleges—a memorable proof of the inefficiency of mere enactments, where there exists no sense of the duty. It is unjust, then, and untrue, to attribute the irreligious condition of society to the defective institutions of our establishments of education. It is to mistake the effect for the cause. These institutions are necessarily influenced by the literary pursuits and taste of the age. Academical studies, whatever their formularies of instruction may be, will rise and fall with the fluctuation of the public mind. The neglect thus produced in those establishments, will indeed, by a natural reaction, tend to perpetuate the debased condition of society, and augment the difficulties of renovation, but the neglect originates in, and is confirmed by, the depravity of the social system.

A better spirit rose up, by God's blessing, towards the close of the last century. The public mind was awakened to a sense of the transcendent importance of revealed truth, and a corresponding reformation has taken place in our establishments of instruction. It must be recorded to the immortal honour of the University of Oxford, that divine Revelation first reassumed its true position among the human sciences within her walls. About thirty years ago a statute passed, which not only made it imperative on the Tutors to instruct the scholars in the Thirty-nine Articles,

but also made a knowledge of the meaning and the proofs of those Articles to be an essential and preliminary part of the examination of every candidate for a degree. Since that time religious learning has continued to be the primary and vital part of the Oxford system. It were well if the sister University had followed so noble an example. If the same Christian principles had been acted upon by her directors, England might possibly have been spared the scandal and peril of the bitter dissensions that are now raging within her walls, or perhaps might have rejoiced in the glorious spectacle of those two venerable bodies, the guardians and witnesses of the national faith, combating hand in hand in the sacred cause of inviolate truth and religious peace.

An equally important reformation has, within a few years, taken place at Eton. A knowledge of divinity has been made a primary and essential part of the examination for the Newcastle Scholarship,—the highest honour of the school. The first day of the examination is exclusively devoted to this subject. The candidate is examined in one of the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the History of the Old Testament, Paley's Evidences, &c. The number of boys who annually pass this ordeal is about forty; but it is evident that the influence of this standard will not be confined to the candidates themselves, but will be felt in a greater or less degree through all the upper classes; and

will give an aim and determinate direction to the private studies of the scholars. In the regular course of business, there is one public schooltime devoted to the study of the New Testament. During Lent an additional public schooltime is set apart for reading Burnet *De Fide et Officiis*. There is also a private lesson in the houses of the Masters on every Sunday morning, in which the Gospel is read and explained. It must be stated that the public schooltime for divinity, is subject to occasional interference. It is missed, on an average, once in five weeks. This is an abuse which ought, on no account, to be continued. The public teaching of divinity should be exposed to no interference whatever: among the irregularities, to the bad effects of which I have already adverted, this must be stigmatized as the most unjustifiable. Whether, however, the proportion of religious instruction would beneficially be increased beyond the two regular weekly lessons, admits, I conceive, of considerable doubt. The discipline of the religious affections is not connected with the question; this, in its earliest stages, does not depend on the exclusive study of the Bible. The question here to be considered, is, in what degree the specific study of the Scripture is calculated to produce in the minds of boys, the most vivid, and most comprehensive views of religion. There is, as it were, a natural inadequacy in a young mind to the scheme of revela-

tion, which renders too close a study of its principles uninteresting and useless; and there is a positive injury to the mental constitution in the formality and habitual insensibility to all religion, produced by a familiar acquaintance with doctrines, which are neither felt nor understood. There is neither experience to perceive the application, nor the personal sense of weakness to bring home the necessities of revealed truth. These conditions would prove the inefficacy and dangerous tendency of a compulsory application to this subject, on too large a scale, in the days of boyhood. There are also reasons, which show that the interests of religion are best advanced, when the study of the Scripture forms altogether a subordinate part of early education.

It may, I conceive, be truly argued, that an adequate reception of revealed truths requires a preparation of the mind in the study of human literature; not, indeed, that the cultivation which literature gives, is any substantial improvement, but because it opens the mind, and renders it capable of an appeal. When the habits of reasoning and judgment have been formed by an independent culture, the mind is enabled to take in the evidences, the bearings, and the connections of revelation: when the mind is enlarged to the compass of human knowledge, it can comprehend the scheme of redemption, which embraces our whole moral and intellectual condition. By an actual

experience, moreover, of the imperfections and limits of uninspired thought, it is led by the soundest and most philosophical calculations, to an appreciation of the importance and the blessings of revelation, which cannot be otherwise acquired. This was in part the principle of the system of teaching pursued in the early Christian Schools of Alexandria, which is called by the ancients the "economical" method<sup>1</sup>. It was the custom to prepare the student by a course of heathen literature, before he was admitted to the study of the Scripture. When well-grounded in rhetoric and philosophy, and the works of

<sup>1</sup> This method is happily illustrated by the interesting account of the conversion of Gregory of Neo-Cæsarea (A. D. 231.), which has been preserved, and is thus stated by Mr. Newman in his *History of the Arians of the Fourth Century*. "He had originally attached himself to the study of rhetoric and the law; but was persuaded by Origen, whose lectures he attended, to exchange these pursuits, first for science, then for philosophy, then for theology, as far as right notions concerning religion could be extracted from the promiscuous writings of the various philosophical sects. Thus while professedly teaching him Pagan philosophy, his skilful master insensibly enlightened him in the knowledge of the Christian faith. Then leading him to Scripture, he explained to him its difficulties as they arose; till Gregory, overcome by the force of truth, announced to his instructor his intention of exchanging the pursuits of this world, for the service of God."—P. 74.

The mind of Christian youth, in a refined age, requires a like cultivation, for the formation of a sound and comprehensive faith, as that of an upright and intelligent heathen.



Pagan authors, he was led on to a nearer approximation to the truth, and at length introduced to the Scriptures, in which the mind thus disciplined, could find, and could appreciate, its satisfactions for every doubt, and its complete intellectual rest. The study thus became, as was apparently intended by its divine Author, what Bacon has beautifully called "the haven and sabbath of all men's contemplation." The student was thus admitted to the sanctuary and holy of holies, through the outer courts of Gentile learning.

Our systems of education have, on the same principle, been made introductory to the study of divinity, equally as to the study of the human sciences. There seems great wisdom in this plan. The habits and powers of thinking require a far more careful discipline for the efficient pursuit of this study, than for any intellectual exertion. Whatever previous training, whatever refinement of taste, whatever expansion of mind and spirit may be required for the right cultivation of human science, must be far more necessary for the study of the divine dispensations. It is reasonable to expect that more good may be effected, that by God's blessing a more rational and profounder faith may thus be produced, than by any mere imparting of theological information. I would conclude, therefore, that for a course of education professedly introductory, the present amount

of religious instruction, if subject to no interference, is duly proportioned. A very objectionable practice, however, is pursued, which demands attention. The only school time on the Sunday is the private lesson of the Gospel; but the latter part of the day is taken up with a Latin prose composition. It should be stated that a moral subject is invariably proposed, and often, portions of a sermon are given to be translated; but it is evident, that, in the composition of a Latin exercise, whatever the subject may be, the attention of the author will be more directed to the proprieties of grammatical construction than to the tendencies of the subject. The display of profane learning will be the aim and object of his study. This practice uniformly pursued at school, must give a worldly direction to Sabbath studies, and habituate the mind to a practical profanation of the day. Whether this exercise ought not at once to be discontinued, and every business connected with classical literature be entirely confined to the week-days, should be an important question in any future plans of improvement.

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*Public Classical Instruction.*

I PURPOSELY avoid all detail on this subject. My object is rather to consider the general prin-



ciples on which the routine of the public studies has been determined, and my observations on the question will be confined to the studies of the upper classes.

The only entire works read are those of Homer, Virgil, and Horace. They have been judiciously selected as the chief subjects, as they are, among all the remains of the ancients, the best adapted to inform and refine the judgment by their wonderful union of exquisite poetry and just moral feeling. Extracts from the Greek and Latin prose writers, and from the Greek minor poets, complete the series of the regular business. The comparative advantage of the study of such extracts or of entire books, has been much discussed. The Author of the "Remarks" would abolish the present system, and substitute entire works of moral and historical writers, and of the dramatic poets. I understand that this arrangement has already been introduced at one of our public schools. There is, indeed, a seeming propriety in this plan, as best suited to a systematic course of reading, and giving a connected knowledge of the different subjects; but I conceive that the study of selected portions, remarkable for beauty of expression or interest of subject, judiciously contrasted with each other, is far better suited to the condition of a boy's mind. The object of education at this stage of the process is not to impart knowledge, but to attract and impress the attention,

and form the habits of judgment on the comparison of the best models. The young mind cannot combine and classify events and opinions, which alone give any value to mere knowledge; nor can it comprehend and trace out the arrangement and connections of ideas, and the unity of thought or action, the perception of which is the only advantage to be derived from a continuous perusal of entire works; or even if this benefit were otherwise attainable by some more favoured minds, it would be lost by the disconnected manner in which a book, when divided into lessons, is read in school; and there is a positive disadvantage, of no slight account, in this method, for the constant recurrence of long passages, without any peculiar interest or beauty, will encourage habits of inattention and disinterest, which it is the greatest object of early education to counteract. These objections refer especially to historical and philosophical works, but they are, I imagine, as conclusive against dramatic poetry. The collection of extracts in present use at Eton, admits of considerable improvement<sup>1</sup>. There is, however, as I conceive, a fallacy in the common objections that

<sup>1</sup> We cannot desire a fairer promise of the improvements that may be expected in this department from the taste and learning of the Eton masters, than what is given in the geographical work lately published under the immediate direction of Mr. Hawtrey. I allude to the "Comparative Atlas of Ancient and Modern Geography: intended for the Use of Eton School."

are urged against the extracts from Lucian. They are too copious, I admit, but I am inclined to believe, paradoxical as it may appear, that a certain proportion of writings of an inferior style is an essential part of such a selection. Freer and more enlarged principles of criticism will be formed by a comparison of styles, varying both in character and in excellence, than from an uniform study of works of equal purity. A habit of discrimination and of curious research into the varying principles of verbal expression is thus excited, which has no place where there is a sameness of character and uniformity of refinement. The young mind should be encouraged to compare, to judge, and to select which is best effected by such a contrast. This principle seems to have guided the selectors in their choice of Lucian ; and it is farther well suited to the purpose, as his Dialogues are peculiarly interesting to young minds, and may produce great moral benefit, by exhibiting the practical follies of the Pagan religion, and the desolateness of a heathen mind under such a conviction. The real defect in this part of the Eton system is, that the same books are read without distinction in all the upper classes. The age of the scholars in the fifth and sixth forms varies, on an average, from fourteen to eighteen, yet they all read the same books, and the same quantities of each. A scholar who attains the top of the school is confined to the same routine of study during the last four or five years of his



course. During this same period, also, there are no public examinations, no trials by which competition may be sustained, and gradual advancement ensured. These, I conceive, to be the prime defects of the present system. The consequence is, that less progress is made, and there is less exertion of mental energy in the upper classes, than in any other part of the school; and the scholar closes his career with habits of application relaxed, and without that forward strain of the mental tone, which can be sustained only by successive trials of strength.

Original composition is, perhaps, the most important feature of the public studies. I had thought that the benefits of this practice had been universally acknowledged, and that the peculiar refinement which characterizes the scholarship of Eton men, had been traced to it. It is, therefore, with unmixed surprise, that I read the following passages in the "Remarks." "The first step to be taken, if any step ever is to be taken at Eton, must consist in an entire abolition of the ridiculous system of original composition." "Composition is, unquestionably, the least useful of all excellencies of scholarship." The object of original composition in a foreign language, is to adapt the ideas of the scholar to the modes of thought and expression peculiar to the writers of that language. The works of the classical authors of Greece and Rome, are the best known models of chastened imagery, of just

reflection, and especially of simple, energetic, and concise expression. Original composition, in express imitation of such works, while it gives full exercise to the native genius of the writer, will instinctively embody his "airy nothings," in the shapes and proportions of those master-minds. There is an attractive and assimilative power in such works which can gradually form, after its own image, the developing sensibilities of inferior minds. Their earlier ideas and images are thus moulded in the die of classical beauty. The personal application of these forms of expression to his own thoughts and feelings, thus enforced, will, moreover, give the scholar a practical sense of the principles of classical composition, which cannot be acquired by the most attentive reading; and is most useful merely as it gives occasion or necessity for a very accurate examination of their works. Literal translations, which the Author of the "Remarks" would substitute in its place, cannot produce this effect. In such an exercise, the habit acquired is that of a servile imitation of words and phrases: there is no exertion of thought, none of that secret process by which the mind arranges, and modifies, and determines the expression of its own conceptions after a fixed standard. It may be safely affirmed, that original imitative composition, as it allows the fullest possible development of the native powers of the mind, and gives the most vivid perception of the

true principles of writing, is the most important part of a classical education.

The average quantity of composition, which is about two exercises a week, is not, I conceive, too large. The irregularity with which they are apportioned, I have already objected to; and I should rejoice in the adoption of some plan of equalization. There is, however, a more serious error to be considered with reference to the kind of composition. The chief importance is now attached to poetical writings: two exercises out of the three, in the regular course of business, are poetical; and the prose one is subject to the greatest interference by skipping. The great force of competition, moreover, in the gaining of honours, is directed to these exercises. I submit, that far greater benefit is to be derived from prose writing with respect both to scholarship, and the habits of thought. Poetical composition, confined by metrical rules, and limited in its words and phrases to established modes of expression, necessarily assumes an artificial form. When uninspired by genius, freely moulding and arranging its outward forms at will, it degenerates into a mere mechanical art, requiring nothing more than a ready application of technical usages. The poetry, moreover, of particular nations, is, in great part, made up of imagery peculiar to their religion and customs, which, when transferred into the language of another people, loses its force



and meaning. An habitual use, then, of such technical phrases and peculiar allusions, will accustom the mind to mere amplifications of artificial diction, without any exertion of thought. One of the greatest of our living poets has attributed to the peculiar technicalities acquired by this early habit of Latin verse making, that style of writing, which in so many instances infected the English poetry of the last generation, which was characterized by imagery without reality, and words without things. This effect, universally produced by mere verse making, cannot arise from prose composition. Its rules are founded on the natural proprieties of thought, and their object is to express the conceptions of the mind, connected in their just order, in the most concise and intelligible form. The writer is not assisted by a set of ready-made phrases; but there is the demand for a certain train of reasoning: and if practised with care, it must tend to produce the most useful habits of all, those of correct association, and simple expression. Ranging too over every subject, and embracing every idiomatic peculiarity, it gives the most extensive knowledge of the language. On the contrary, poetical composition is so limited in its phrases and applications, that writing Latin, and Latin verses, are proverbially two distinct processes. It may, indeed, be argued, on the other hand, that poetry is more in accordance with the workings of a boy's mind, than the rea-



soning required for prose writing; but to this objection, it may be answered, that the imaginative connexion of ideas, which prevail in a young mind, should be controlled rather than encouraged; that there is no fear of this valuable faculty being unduly impaired by such a forced control, and that the reasoning powers, at their earliest development, ought, on the highest moral grounds, to be guided and improved. But with a view to the knowledge of the language, there can, I conceive, be no doubt of its superior importance; and it may be added, that as a mere accomplishment, available at the Universities, and in after life, when the art of verse writing is of no general use, or is lost with the want of practice, it is, beyond all comparison, of greater value.

There is also a culpable neglect in the want of English composition. In addition to its value, as an almost indispensable accomplishment, it might be made of essential benefit, when contrasted with the writing of Greek and Latin. That, I conceive, would be the most perfect system of education in this important department, which, by enforcing the practical comparison of verbal expression in these different languages, would give an instinctive perception of the varying forms of thought, as exhibited under such variety of circumstance. While dwelling on this part of the subject, it is impossible not to allude, in terms of the deepest gratitude, to the generosity and wis-

dom which instituted the Newcastle Scholarship. It has produced an excitement, and given a determinate aim to the exertions of the students, which has already worked an important influence on Eton Scholarship, and encourages the brightest hopes for its progressive advancement. It has, moreover, gone a great way in remedying the defective want of competition, and honourable distinction in the upper classes, to which I before alluded. Still it never can fully supply the deficiency, as it affects only the more industrious and talented scholars; nor does it lessen the necessity for alteration, as the discipline of a school must be accommodated to the necessities of the dull and indolent, and those with whom exertion must be made imperative.

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*Private Classical Instruction.*

THIS is a very important part of the present system. The tutors give private lessons in their houses, to small classes of their own pupils, in which the books to be studied are selected at the discretion of the tutor. There are in general two private lessons in the week, for each pupil, in addition to the Scripture lesson of the Sunday morning. This custom is considered by the author of the "Remarks" to be a defect of the system. He says,



"The very term, private business in a public school, involves an absurdity, for it can only be understood to mean something, which to a certain amount, will remedy the defects of the School." I would argue, on the contrary, that the most superficial consideration of the nature of a public school, conducted on a large scale, demonstrates the essential advantages, and absolute necessity of such an arrangement. The average number of scholars in the public classes may be stated at fifty. In classes of such a size, composed of boys, greatly differing in age and capacity, it is impossible for the tutor to adjust the matter and mode of his instruction to the peculiar necessities of each scholar. The books read are adapted to the average condition of the class, and the remarks and explanations of the tutor are necessarily of the same general nature. The discipline of the school, moreover, requires a formality and restraint in the public lectures, which preclude that confidential intercourse between the tutor and pupil, which alone can lead to an accurate knowledge of the mental condition of the latter. These disadvantages, which essentially attach to a public course of study, can be remedied in no other way than by private lectures, where the classes are small, and the scholars are distributed more precisely according to their comparative progress; where the subject of study is selected with a particular view to their condition,

and a friendlier and less formal intercourse is established between the tutor and pupil. More good may be done by this practice than by the best possible disposition of public lectures. It may be stated, as a proof of the advantage and necessity of the practice, that at the Universities, the public lectures in the different Colleges have been almost entirely superseded by private instruction of precisely the same nature as the "private business" at Eton. The public lectures are now confined to one or two particular subjects, and attendance on them is required only during a short part of the University course. The main business is conducted by private lectures in the tutor's rooms.

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*Extra Instruction.*

SINCE the revival of learning, modern literature has assumed an interest and importance which has ensured to it, in many respects, a just superiority over the records of ancient wisdom. Our public Schools and Universities, however, have continued to confine their subjects of study to the literature of Greece and Rome. In adhering so closely, or as shallow writers presume to say, with such antiquated bigotry to these studies, a principle has been acted upon, which is, I con-

ceive, in true accordance with the philosophy of the human mind.

The object proposed in all our systems of education is preparatory. They do not pretend to teach any particular sciences, or any species of knowledge, but provide instruction introductory to all science and every department of learning. There is a discipline furnished for the mind, by which, though it may then collect no available information, habits and powers of thinking are gradually formed, which may be applied with equal force to any after-study, and the mind becomes fitted by its acquired tendencies for any intellectual exertion whatever. During this preparatory process, the scholar may give no outward show of learning, nor exhibit any useful acquirement, but he is then undergoing a secret training, which gives a regulated energy, and a fine organization, fitting him to move hereafter with dignity and ease in any orbit of the intellectual world. The sciences, the learned professions, and general literature, have equally been the gainers, by a course of discipline which is thus alike applicable to them all; which, avoiding all peculiarities of thought, that would arise from a more specific course of study, give the fullest natural expansion to the mind and spirit, that may embrace with equal facility any scientific pursuit to which it may afterwards devote its attention. Whether such an introductory course



be not carried on too long at our Universities, may, perhaps, be reasonably questioned; but there can be no doubt that such ought to be the nature of a system to be pursued at a preparatory school. It is to provide such an introductory discipline of the best order, that our academical studies are still confined to ancient literature. The works of the master-spirits of the free nations of the old world are the best known models of composition in every form; the most finished examples of pure taste, of just and exalted thought. No modern nation has produced works that can be compared with them in these essential excellencies. The literature of Greece and Rome, in their mutual action, co-operating with, or counteracting their respective influences, as either becomes extravagant or false, are suited more perfectly than any writings we possess, to give a manly freedom to the reason, refinement to the judgment, force and simplicity to the expression. Their operation on the mental faculties and moral emotions, is by a secret but sure process, by which the mind imbibes and assimilates to its system the truest principles of thought, and the finest discriminations of taste. Extraordinary genius may, indeed, by its own exquisite sensibilities, acquire the same culture from an independent study of human nature, but ordinary minds must learn their principles of action through the medium

of the great minds of classical antiquity. It is a vulgar complaint that a scholar, who has completed his academical course, knows nothing on subjects of modern interest. The author of the "Abuses" thinks that it is "preposterous to confine a boy's education solely to a knowledge of Greek and Latin, neither of which he will probably keep up after he has left school." To such objectors, it can only be answered, that they mistake the object of education; and know not the value of mental discipline. There is, I conceive, no greater fallacy than the ignorant cry against classical learning, as unavailable for the duties of active life, and unprofitable for common conversation. It is the foundation of all science, the introduction to every department of human knowledge. There is a long and laborious discipline to be gone through before the mind can develop its fullest powers. An exact resemblance may be traced, in the mode of their civilization, between the mind of nations and of individuals. The civilization of modern Europe grew up with the profound study of ancient authors; and resting on that solid basis, modern learning has pursued a steady and undeviating course of improvement. History, on the contrary, proves that the nations of modern times which have based their systems of education on their own native literature, or even have studied the works of the ancients only through the medium of translations,



have directed their intellectual energies to no true purpose, and have rapidly degenerated from the inferior standard which they have ever chanced to attain.

The public studies of Eton are, in accordance with these principles, entirely confined to ancient literature. The sciences and modern languages are, under the direction of separate teachers, unconnected with the school. The pursuit of these studies is left to the discretion of the parents of the scholars.

It is suggested by the author of the "Remarks," that the business "done with their masters ought to be brought into closer contact and more intimate union with the school." This is, I believe, a general opinion, but the question involves points of difficulty which are seldom taken into account. No one, indeed, can dispute that a knowledge of arithmetic, of the fundamental parts of mathematics, and a familiar acquaintance with, at least, the French language, would be a most desirable addition to a course of education. Considering the present state of natural science, and the benefits to be derived from the use of the most comprehensive modern language, they become, indeed, indispensable acquisitions. But it is a very doubtful question, how far they may advantageously be connected with the routine of classical study at a large public school. Among those who wish for such a modification of the established system, it is

not, I apprehend, generally intended, that these additional studies should be carried on under the same tutors who conduct the regular business of the school. I am aware that this plan has been lately adopted at one of our public schools, according to which arrangement each master instructs his respective class equally in classics, mathematics, and the French language. I can speak with no positive certainty of the actual workings of this system, though I have good authority to believe that it has signally failed ; but there are such palpable objections to the union of such distinct departments under the same teacher, that no one will doubt of its unfitness to produce any effectual good. The only reasonable plan would be to attach the particular master of each department to the general establishment, and appropriate to each, certain public school hours. The question of such an arrangement, turns on the practicability of teaching these subjects to a large class. The number of scholars in each class is, as I have stated, about fifty or sixty. By no disposition could they be reduced to a much lower number for any purpose of public instruction. It might, indeed, be possible to teach arithmetic, algebra, and mathematics to such classes, on the system now generally adopted in France, which is admirably suited to sustain and concentrate the attention of large numbers on the sum or figure to be worked. But this system, according as I understand it, cannot be carried



into effect without some previous knowledge and practical readiness in each pupil. The mere rudiments of each science, as they must be taught to boys during a considerable period of their course, cannot be taught on this plan; nor can such instruction be given by any means but those of individual tuition. Large classes may be under the master's superintendence at the same time, but his instruction must be imparted by separate communications with each scholar. These difficulties are still more insurmountable in the teaching of modern languages, where the chief benefits to be gained by early instruction, are pronunciation and the accurate perception and use of idiomatical constructions, infinitely varying with the usages of conversation. These can be taught or acquired only by individual tuition. A class of eight or ten is, I conceive, the largest that can be superintended by the master to any good effect. I would argue, then, the absolute impracticability of connecting these departments with the public business of so large a school as that of Eton. They should still be conducted by masters, acting under the direction of the head master, but unconnected with the general business of the school, and supplied with voluntary pupils.

There is, however, a great and culpable defect in the present administration of these departments, and these important branches of learning are almost completely neglected. They are not sufficiently



encouraged or enforced, nor are they so arranged as to be conducted without interference with the regular business of the school ; neither is there sufficient authority attached to the office, to enable the extra master to support an effectual control. This is well in the case of the fine arts, or mere accomplishments, but not in the several pursuits of science and the foreign languages, which require as much compulsion with boys as their classical studies. The consequence of these and other causes is, that few are induced to commence, and those few are not encouraged or compelled to pursue these studies. They must, indeed, after all, be left to the discretion of parents, but some arrangement might be made by which they would be more strongly recommended, and when once entered upon by any scholar, regularly enforced ; and such authority be given to the master as is necessary to conduct the instruction to any effect. They might, moreover, be so adjusted with respect to the regular business, that both could be carried on without any interference, so that no excuse for remissness in either case would be admitted ; and while the latter engrosses all the public attention, these extra studies might also be under the same controlling discipline, and encouraged by prospects of honorable distinction.

*The Foundation.*

IN considering the actual condition of an ancient establishment, and the equity of its administration, it is necessary to take into account the effects produced upon its institutions by the progress of society and other external circumstances. Without this principle of accommodation, we can draw no fair conclusion as to the correspondence of its present state with the intentions of the original foundation. This, indeed, is so self-evident a proposition, that I should have thought the statement of it unnecessary, if it had not been entirely overlooked by those who have attacked the present directors of Eton College. They have presumed to bring against them the charge of injustice and oppression, from a view of the literal meaning of the statutes of the College, as applicable to the original condition of the scholars, without considering the altered position of that body, and the influence of that change on the application of the statutes. If it can be shown, as it will be my object to show, that the condition of the scholars is completely altered, and is no longer such as was contemplated by the Founder, it is but reasonable to expect that a corresponding change must have taken place in the actual working of the statutes. To the false reasoning, of which I now complain, I attribute the greater part of the abuse which has been so unfairly bestowed on this establishment;



but in addition to the erroneous conclusions thence deduced, the grossest misrepresentations have been propagated, which can have proceeded only from an ignorance of the nature of the Foundation, or from the most malicious motives. I allude in particular to a late publication, in which the author has drawn up as cheme of what he calls "abuses," professing to be literal extracts from the statutes, but which are, with few exceptions, directly untrue. Whether these mis-statements are intentional, or arise from a false interpretation of the passages referred to, may perhaps admit of some charitable doubts, but whoever ventures to bring such charges against a public body, should, at least, in common regard to his own character, take care that his own assertions are equally free from error or falsehood. I shall have occasion to show the inaccuracy of these statements in the course of the following remarks. The most correct view of the subject will, I conceive, be derived from a slight sketch of the original Foundation, contrasted with the present condition of the scholars. I have before me a copy of the Statutes, which were printed by order of the House of Commons, in 1818 ; forming a part of the Fourth Report of the Select Committee on the Education of the Lower Orders. Similar copies are, I believe, preserved in all the public libraries of the kingdom, which are open to all who may wish to collect the truth from the original records.

The original Foundation, as constituted in 1441, consisted of a provost, ten fellows, (since reduced by royal dispensation, on occasion of the reduced income of the college, to seven,) ten chaplains, (since reduced to two), as many clerks, and sixteen choristers, of an upper and under master, and seventy scholars. There was also provision for thirteen servitors, to be elected at the discretion of the provost, whose peculiar office was to assist the parish clerk in ringing the chapel bells; to keep clean the chapel, the college, and outhouses; and to wait on the provost and fellows in hall and in their chambers<sup>1</sup>. Students also were admitted from any part of the kingdom, who, under the title of Oppidans, shared many of the advantages of the institution, though unattached to the Foundation. I shall confine my observations to those parts of the establishment which are connected with the scholars on the Foundation. They were ordered to be "poor and indigent boys," who had acquired a certain proficiency in reading and the first elements of singing. Candidates were disabled by illegitimacy, or any such physical deformity as incapacitated them

<sup>1</sup> The author of the "Eton Abuses," asserts, "The Statutes ordain thirteen servitors to wait upon the provost, fellows, and *scholars* in hall," and talks of the disgraceful nature of the breach of the Statute. The statement is untrue, for the Statute expressly limits the services of this body to the provost and fellows, without any mention at all of the scholars.



for the clerical profession; and every scholar was bound to undergo the "first tonsure," within a year of his election. They were admitted from all parts of England, though a preference was to be shown to the natives of certain districts; and there is a particular provision in favour of such choristers as should be considered most worthy of the distinction. The scholars and choristers were apparently of the same rank. The same qualifications were required of the candidates to both situations, and they were excluded by the same disabilities, and both orders were equally bound to qualify themselves for the clerical profession. The servitors also were to be prepared for taking Holy Orders at the age of twenty-five, when they were dismissed from the College. The three classes were educated together in the public schools, and instruction was afforded gratuitously to them all, as well as to the students unattached to the Foundation.

The allowances were in general the same for the scholars, the choristers, and the clerks. They were all allowed commons to the amount of 10*d.* per week, which was sufficient for two meals a day. Scholars and choristers sat at the same tables in the hall. The dishes were placed on the table by the younger scholars<sup>1</sup>; they were

<sup>1</sup> These provisions are thus stated in the pamphlet alluded to. The statutes "provide ample allowances for breakfast, dinner, and supper, with the use of certain fisheries." The



served by the domestics of the College, and one of the scholars was employed during dinner, in reading aloud some portion of the Lives of the Fathers, or other sacred work. In case of sickness, they received their usual commons in their chamber. If the illness continued beyond a month, and there was no immediate prospect of recovery, the sick person was removed from the College, and in case his friends were unable to support him, he received a regular supply of money, equivalent to his allowance of commons. If after three months, there was still no hope of recovery, he was dismissed from the Foundation. The allowance of clothing was likewise the same for the scholars, the clerks, the choristers, and servitors. They annually received the same proportion of cloth, of the same texture and colour, which was sufficient to furnish them with a long gown, with a hood, (*toga talaris cum capicio*);

fisheries formed part of the general revenues of the College, from whence the general expenditure was supplied. I need scarcely observe, that "breakfast" is a modern invention, and that only two meals could be contemplated by the founder; nay, from a peculiar expression in one of the statutes, it may be inferred, that one meal was the general allowance, and that the second was only an occasional indulgence. In the statute which determines the order of sitting in hall, it is provided:—*Item statuimus, ordinamus et volumus quod propositus, &c. &c. prandeant quotidie in aulâ communi, et cum cœnare debeant, cœnent in eadem.* The particular occasions on which they were to have supper are not stated.

the gown worn was the common monastic habit, or perhaps like what is still worn by the Blue-Coat School boys, and formed their chief, if not their only clothing. The statutable proportion of linen was probably such as is still deemed sufficient by the Franciscan friars. They were allowed bedding, and something for extra clothing; of what kind does not appear, though from the smallness of the sum applied to the purpose, it must have been of the most trifling value. They were expressly forbidden to wear coloured clothes, or any dress that was inconsistent with the clerical costume of the times. No money payment was allowed; and it is expressly ordered, that all the allowances mentioned above should in no case exceed a certain fixed amount. This was not the case with the allowances of the Fellows, which, under certain circumstances, were ordered to be considerably increased<sup>1</sup>. All the

<sup>1</sup> The justice of the present distribution of the college property has been much canvassed, and has already been under the consideration of the legislature. As the question does not immediately fall in with my subject, but is too important to be entirely passed over, I shall consider it in a note. In the pamphlet before alluded to, the provisions of the statutes relating to this question are thus stated:—"Statutes require that the fines and land-tax should be applied to the common use; entitle the Fellows to £10 a year stipend, and 2s. a week, or £5 4s. a year for commons;—entitle the Provost and Fellows to allowances amounting in all to £200 per annum." The historical incorrectness of the first sentence need only be men-



members of the College were lodged in the quadrangle or cloisters. In the upper story, the Provost, Fellows, and Masters, had separate apart-

tioned. It is well known that fines and land-tax are inventions of a much later date than the foundation of the College. The other statements are tolerably correct. The Fellows received, in addition to some other allowances of clothing, &c. a salary of £10 a year, and 1s. 6d. a week for commons; but this latter sum varied with the price of provisions, and was considerably increased in years of scarcity, which was not the case with the allowance of the other members of the College. The distribution of the surplus revenues is not provided for in the Statutes. The case does not seem to have been contemplated by the Founder. The only provision that at all applies to such a condition is, where it is stated that, in case the funds set apart for the supply of the commons should exceed the expenditure, the residue should be applied to the "Common use of the College,"—"ad communem utilitatem." The intention of the Founder, if he ever supposed the possibility of the case, cannot be gathered from this passage. At the time of the foundation, and, I believe, up to the year 1551, the revenues were not much more than sufficient to meet the general expences of domus; and during that period the distribution was regularly made according to statute. The revenues of the College did not increase in proportion to the increased value of property, as they were greatly diminished by spoliation during the reigns of Edward IV. and Henry VIII.; and the Fellows seem also to have suffered at different times from the undue usurpation of the Provosts. It appears, however, from a calculation of the accounts which have been preserved, that since the early part of the sixteenth century the increase of revenue has been in a ten-fold proportion. About the latter end of the same century the introduction of fines made an important alteration in the revenues of all collegiate bodies. In the cases of Eton and

ments. The other members were distributed in large chambers on the ground floor. The number in each chamber is not expressly stated, but

Winchester, (which are similarly constituted, each being a collegiate and academical body united), the annual or reserved rents were apportioned for the supply of domus ; the fines were distributed as the private salaries of the Fellows. The proportion of the two rents was made according to Act of Parliament, in the cases of Eton and Winchester, as of all other collegiate bodies, and the proportions have never varied from the original enactment. This precedent was followed, and a corresponding proportion was made in the redemption of the land-tax during the late war. I am unable to explain on what grounds the fines were in that early period exclusively appropriated to the Fellows ; but their right was distinctly recognised by the legislature in the Act that regulated the distribution of the land-tax. Their right, according to the spirit, if not the letter of the foundation, may also be inferred, though it cannot be proved, by the provision which ordered the increase of the commons-allowance of the Fellows under certain circumstances, while that of the scholars is expressly limited to a fixed sum. It should be remembered, that in the original foundation, the board and lodging was considered to be the chief part of the emolument of the Fellows. The salary was of inferior importance, and the intentions of the Founder as to the existing circumstances, must be gathered from his provisions referring to the former, not to the latter. It may also be argued, that as the entire control of the revenues was entrusted by statute exclusively to the Provost and Fellows, and the government and support of the scholars was under their sole direction, it could never be intended that the latter should be actually enriched by any possible contingencies, or that their claims could extend beyond a sufficient maintenance for the purposes of education. Justice could only require that their condition should be

apparently two chambers at the most were apportioned to the scholars; and provision was made that three of the elder and most trustworthy

improved in a fair ratio with the increase of the college income. That the scholars are still liberally maintained according to the provisions of the Founder, and the possibilities of the case, and that their allowances have been augmented in a just proportion to the increased revenues of the College, will be subsequently shown; and from the additions to their general comfort lately made, I can have no doubt, that as still further means and opportunities of improvement are opened, the liberal disposition, already displayed, will continue to be exerted. What I conceive to be the equitable distribution of the revenues, in the present state of things, may be shown from the constitution of a similar foundation at Oxford. Christ Church College, after the dissolution of Wolsey's foundation, was re-established by Henry VIII., under the mixed form of a cathedral and academical body. The estates and other property were assigned to the Dean and Canons, on the condition of their maintaining a certain number of scholars, and other members of the foundation. The Provost and Fellows of Eton resemble a Dean and Chapter in their constitution, and are connected with the academical part of the establishment in the same manner as the Chapter of Christ Church. I conclude that the scholars of Eton should likewise be maintained by the College, and have no share of its surplus revenues.

It may be further stated, that the private salaries of the Fellows would now be of considerable amount, even if confined to the statutable money payment. This payment was originally fixed at £10, and was made from corn rents. If the increased value of money be calculated, together with the increased prices of corn, it will be found that this sum would exceed £200 of sterling money.

It has been stated in the same publication, that the Provost



boys should be placed in each, and made responsible for the conduct of the rest <sup>1</sup>. Below the age of fourteen, two lay together in one bed. Each scholar made his own bed, during which operation they were to sing the morning hymn to the Virgin.

This brief account may give a sufficient view of the original foundation. On the slightest examination of its present condition it will be evident that the position of the scholars is now completely changed. They were originally poor boys of the same rank and estimation as the choristers

and Fellows are forbidden by statute to hold livings, but that they now hold them to any amount. The latter part of the statement is incorrect, as the livings they are allowed to hold are expressly limited in amount. They hold them by right of dispensation, granted by Queen Elizabeth, at the recommendation of the Visitor, and Archbishop of Canterbury, for the time being. It has indeed been objected, that the obtaining or making use of any dispensation is also forbidden by statute. It is evident, however, that this restriction cannot be supposed to exclude the dispensing power of the Crown, when rendered expedient by change of circumstances, but was intended to prevent any interference in the laws of the College by the Romish See.

<sup>1</sup> This provision is thus stated in the pamphlet so often alluded to: "Statutes provide one room for every three boys, free from any expense." This is evidently a piece of bad construing, for the three boys mentioned in the statute, which the Author considers as the number assigned to each chamber, are the three appointed to superintend the rest of the scholars. I cannot but regret that this virulent impugner of "Eton Abuses" should furnish, in his own person, so lamentable an instance of the deficiencies of education, of which he so deeply complains.

and clerks, intended for the clerical profession, and therefore to be lodged, supplied, and educated according to the monastic habits of the age. They are now, with very few exceptions, gentlemen by birth, and of families of comparative opulence, requiring an education, and support, of a very different kind, from that contemplated by the Founder, or from what can be supplied by his provisions. The progressive change of their condition is slightly marked in the annals of the College. In the earliest accounts that are preserved there is a charge, though of trifling amount, for "*vestitus et lectisternium*," extra clothing and bedding. This charge is not found, however, in any accounts since the year 1506. It would thus appear, that even within fifty years of the foundation, parents of greater opulence and respectability began to send their children to the College, who, from a wish to keep pace with their fellow-oppidans, obtained permission to disuse the regular dress, and to clothe their children at their own expense. The allowance for bedding has been since restored, and is still continued, but the extra clothing has never been supplied since that time. A similar advance may be traced in the change of their lodging, which occurred about a century and a half ago. The long chamber was then given up to them, without the cloisters, which was built on the site of the ancient almshouse and hospice. They were distributed in this



chamber for their greater comfort, and were allowed the use of a fire, which up to that time was forbidden in all parts of the College. Those who applied for the indulgence of sleeping in this room, paid one pound a year for the privilege. This payment has since been remitted, except in the case of two chambers, which were subsequently added, when, in consequence of each boy being allowed a separate bed, the long chamber could not contain the whole number. I would observe by the way, as objections are made by the Author of the "Eton Abuses," to this payment for lodging in the small chambers, that the whole present distribution is matter of accommodation, and that this payment might still be equitably demanded for lodging in all the chambers now in use, as was arranged at the time of the alteration.

The scholars are now in general on an equality with their fellow-students in wealth and respectability, and this total change has had a considerable effect on the workings of the institution. The charities were adapted to a class of boys that no longer exists. Though the scholars still receive the chief and essential benefits of the Foundation, yet the supplies granted for their support are inadequate to their present wants, and in some cases they are become unfit objects for the intended charities. They are still lodged at the college expense, according to the original plan, though with increased comforts. They are

still supplied with bedding; and they have not now to make their beds, or to sing a hymn. The system of lodging together in such large numbers may be objectionable under existing circumstances, but it is strictly in accordance with the provisions of the statute. They still receive the full allowance of commons—they are allowed one pound and a half of meat a-day, the same quantity of bread, and a proportionate supply of beer. Vegetables and other minor comforts have since been added. They are confined, it is true, to one kind of meat, and this custom has occasioned much ridicule and abuse. It arose, I believe, from an old college regulation, according to which, among the supplies in kind, regularly furnished by the estates, a certain number of sheep was always included. It has been continued, I believe, from the difficulty found in calculating the proportions of the allowances in joints of different meats. There can, however, be no reasonable objection to its discontinuance, and if it is distasteful to the scholars, the alteration might reasonably be urged. They still receive the college gown, which though unavailable according to its present make, as a part of modern dress, is yet in quantity and material what the statute strictly ordains. If, therefore, the scholars would renounce the modern luxuries of tea, rolls, and butter, and the still more unstatutable fashions of coats, waistcoats, and shirts; they would still have all that was necessary for



food and clothing, according to the will and provisions of the Founder. The allowance for extra clothing, whatever it might be, was of so undesirable a nature, that it was rejected with disdain, within fifty years after the foundation, and would not now be accepted. In general comforts, and minor indulgences, their condition has been improved in a still greater ratio than the revenues of the College. The present Provost stated, on his examination before the Committee, that while the increase of revenue, since 1506, had been in a tenfold proportion, that of the expense of the scholars appears to be in a proportion of thirteen to one.

There is one other point which demands more serious notice: I allude to the instruction of the scholars; which according to the literal terms of the statute, should be provided gratuitously; but for which, with the exception of a few cases, a regular payment is now required. This innovation is considered the great abuse of the system; and there is, without doubt, a seeming injustice in the measure; but I am convinced that a slight attention to the changes that have taken place in the College, will fully establish the propriety and equity with which this departure from the original provisions has been determined. It must be remembered that the benefit of gratuitous instruction was afforded equally to all the students;—to the oppidans, as well as to the scho-

lars and choristers. When the oppidans increased in number, and the assistance of additional teachers was required; and the great expense of education at the Universities, entitled the masters attached to the foundation to a larger salary than was provided by the College, it became necessary to raise a fund to meet this demand. This was furnished by the exaction of a certain payment from the oppidans; a measure, contrary indeed to the statute, but rendered necessary by the altered condition of the school. The scholars on the foundation continued to receive gratuitous instruction, during a long period subsequent to this change; but when in process of time their condition underwent so entire an alteration; when their parents in point of resources were generally on an equality with those of the oppidans, and they were no longer persons of such a rank as to be entitled to a charity which had been already withdrawn from the latter; and when they received an education of so enlarged a kind as could not be supplied by the provisions of the Founder; and the master, according to the present rank and character of the office, was not fairly remunerated by his statutable salary, there arose the same equitable propriety for deviating from the original system in their case, as had been already established and acted upon in the case of the oppidans. It should be added, that this is strictly a voluntary payment, that it would not



be enforced, if any objection were raised ; and still in all cases which come under the meaning of the statute, those of comparative poverty, such as were contemplated by the Founder, this payment is never required. A few cases of this kind generally occur ; and such scholars receive also the additional benefit of gratuitous instruction from the assistant tutors. It must not be considered mere verbal argument, if I state, that by the literal meaning of the statute, the master is not forbidden to receive a voluntary payment from the scholars. He is required not to "exact, demand, or claim," "exigere, petere, vindicare," words evidently implying compulsion, and equivalent, I conceive, to a legal demand<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> It may be added, that at Winchester College the constitution of which, as far as regards the provisions for the scholars, is similar to that of Eton, the same alteration has from the same causes been made. The Eton scholar pays £6 6s. per annum ; the same sum as is paid by the oppidans. The Winchester scholars are charged £10 10s. per annum. In other respects, the latter have not many additional comforts, which are now provided at Eton.

I would further observe, that the regulation at Eton which prevents the scholars becoming private pupils, may seem to be an unnecessary, and, in many cases, an oppressive restriction. If they are placed on an equality with the oppidans in the school charges, it would appear reasonable that the power of incurring this extra expense should, at the same time, be granted. There is, however, this weighty objection now urged against the permission ; that it would give an unfair advantage to the wealthier scholars, over their poorer competitors in the examination for

I contend, therefore, that it is as idle, as narrow-minded, to talk of injustice and breach of duty, in cases where a strict adherence to the original regulations is inconsistent with the present condition of the school. It becomes, however, a matter of momentous inquiry, whether, under existing circumstances, such an alteration should not be made in the system, as would adapt it more closely to the present state of the society. I am fully sensible of all the objections which attach to such innovations; and no one, with the reverence for antiquity which I cherish within my heart, could propose, without regret, any measure which would interfere with the sacredness of a time-hallowed institution; but I submit to the considerate wisdom of the rulers of the College, that there exists a state of things which imperatively calls for some modification of the old arrangements. It is at the least unwise to support, as the authorized and attested regulations of the foundation, enactments which it is impossible to carry into effect; and thus establish a sense of duty, the fulfilment of which is precluded by the necessities of the case. It is this palpable disparity between the laws of the foundation, and its actual administration, which has brought so

King's College Scholarships. The permission cannot, indeed, be fairly granted, unless the masters would agree to give private as well as public instruction, gratuitously, in cases of acknowledged poverty.



much, and such bitter scandal on its directors ; and there is, indeed, an apparent truth in such charges, while the authority of the ancient provisions is nominally supported. It is, moreover, due, in fairness to the scholars, and to the classes of society to which they belong, that their real position should be accurately ascertained, and openly avowed. They now bear much of the opprobrium, which is vulgarly attached to the condition of charity-boys, while, in fact, they are in many respects on an equality with their school-fellows in expenditure, as in birth and education. Whether some alterations of the statutes themselves, corresponding to their actual fulfilment, be not most desirable for the sake of truth and justice, I would submit for consideration. It would, indeed, be an extreme measure ; but one enforced, I conceive, by an adequate necessity. Since, however, these inconsistencies do not involve any practical moral evils, I will not dwell longer on this question. I turn more readily to an important part of the system, which, though no abuse, has become, in the changes of time, totally at variance with our present social condition, and productive of the worst consequences. I allude to the mode of life in the College chambers, which is inconsistent with all the manners and feelings of the age, and is opposed to the principles of moral discipline. The custom of lodging together in large numbers, has become associated in

the public mind with a want of decency and self-respect ; and though it may not affect the morality of the boys, reflects on them a certain discredit, which materially lowers their character in the estimation of their school-fellows. It is also a necessary part of this mode of life, that practices are enforced, and menial offices of a disreputable nature are exacted of the lower boys, which establish a marked distinction between them and their school-fellows of a very painful kind ; and which tend to produce coarse and ungentlemanly habits. There is no reason why the collegers should not occupy the same honourable position among their fellows, as is now held by the foundation students of our Universities. The actual disparity that exists in the conventional rank of the two bodies, can be accounted for only by the prejudices which attach to the mode of life still upheld at Eton. Independently of these evils, which may perhaps be lightly considered as mere matters of opinion, but are not on that account less oppressive, there is a practical evil of the worst tendency in the moral contagion arising from the constant intercourse of such large numbers in a public room. Not only are the studies and private pursuits of the scholar effectually interrupted, but there is an entire want of that individual existence, and inviolate retirement, which, according to the present habits of this country, are essentially



necessary even among boys, for the production of pure and exalted feelings. There is no opportunity for such self-discipline, and the mind that experiences the necessity is necessarily injured by the loss; while among minds of a lower tone, the principles of evil spread and are multiplied by continued contact, and mutual excitement, to an infinite degree. Moreover, there is an entire want of effectual control over the boys while they are in their chambers. This want of superintendence has been caused by a change which has taken place since the occupation of the present chambers. At the time when this distribution was made, the apartments of the two Masters were also changed, and rooms were provided for them at either extremity of the new building, so that the scholars might still remain under their immediate care. These apartments, however, were too confined for married men, and the great increase of the oppidans rendered their residence without the College walls more desirable; but the consequence of this new arrangement was that all control was withdrawn from the chambers of the scholars. It is true, that the upper boys are held responsible for the conduct of the junior classes, and in fact exercise considerable authority over them; but this is insufficient for the purposes of moral discipline, and the elder scholars of course themselves require the most constant and watchful superintendence. There are temptations and tendencies in this

unnatural freedom, which few boys have the will, and still fewer the courage to withstand. The license thus given, and the illicit practices thus carried on without the possibility of restraint, have produced among the scholars low and unworthy habits, which, in many cases, have sunk their moral condition below the high and honourable tone of their fellow students. This is a painful subject, and one that I would gladly have avoided, did I not feel deeply the lamentable consequences that spring from these debasing agencies; I, therefore, unscrupulously assert this fact, on the evidence of my own long and close experience, and I appeal for its confirmation to the testimonies of my school-fellows. I attribute these evils, and the disrepute attached to the name of a Collegian, to the mode of life there pursued, to its vicious communications, to its freedom from restraint. They are evils essentially connected with the system of the College chambers; and I am fully convinced, that while this system is upheld, no improvements, no exertions of authority whatever, can materially affect the moral condition of the scholars. It is on the highest religious grounds, therefore, that I argue for the necessity of an entire alteration of this part of the system. It is from a settled conviction, that the mental constitution of thousands among the higher classes of our society is permanently deteriorated by its continuance. I would not venture to propose so



radical a change, unless I believed that an adequate necessity existed. I am no advocate for unnecessary innovation; and especially in these times, when the spirit of desecration is spreading like a plague over England, I cling to the customs and institutions of our forefathers with an enthusiastic veneration, heightened by the feelings of awful tenderness, that attach to the objects of our love in their season of decay. I can appreciate and respect the prejudices and conscientious scruples of those, who would uphold existing establishments even when they become inconsistent with sound and dispassionate prudence; but if my conclusions are true, they establish, I conceive, a case of moral necessity which no principles whatever can gainsay, or countervail, for it is the first duty of the directors of a religious institution to regulate the workings of the system entrusted to their care, in such a manner, that it may produce, under all change of circumstances, the greatest possible religious blessings. It is with these views, and from these motives, that I have long and anxiously desired such an adjustment of the original plans to the existing state of society; and it is with an earnest hope that my principles may not be misinterpreted, that I now presume publicly to recommend such a measure to the consideration of the rulers of the College. I am fully aware of the extreme difficulties and great expense that would attend such an alteration.

There are questions of detail connected with it, which involve objections that would seem to be insurmountable, still I am convinced, and without such a conviction, the proposal would be useless and unwarrantable, that there is a generosity and an energy among the present governors, which require only a sufficient motive to be exerted to the fullest extent. I am not prepared to enter into the details of a new arrangement; such an interference might justly be deemed presumptuous. I would observe only, that the same objections which I have urged against the present system, would hold equally against a distribution into smaller chambers; or even still greater and more pernicious evils might be apprehended from such a plan. There seems to be no other alternative than between large chambers and separate apartments. The younger boys might possibly, without danger, be lodged together, provided they were under an effectual superintendence, but it would be necessary, that all above a certain age should be placed in single rooms. Their apartments might be provided by a new disposition of the present building, or they might be distributed in extra houses. It would at all events be an indispensable part of any new arrangement, that the rooms should be placed under the immediate control of a master, and that the same energetic discipline should be supported, as is now exerted over the oppidans. The name of Long Chamber has become a proverb and a reproach wherever



the fame of Eton has been spread. That the prejudices usually entertained against it, are either false or overcharged, is well known to those who are familiar with its arrangements, or have compared them with those of similar establishments. Still no one can overlook the positive evils of the system : but how great soever may be the desire of alteration, it will be unjust and unreasonable to disregard, or treat with levity, the many and almost insurmountable difficulties which stand in the way of such an undertaking.

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*Moral Discipline.*

I HAVE hitherto confined my observations to the direct system of instruction under its different branches ; it remains only to offer a few remarks on what may be considered the more peculiar object of public education. Scholarship and general learning may be acquired as well by private tuition, or even by self-instruction, as at a public school ; indeed, under every system of education, intellectual acquirements must still, in a great degree, be left to the native energies of the scholar, and to agencies which are beyond the control of a regular routine of business. The chief and peculiar object of a public school, and the standard by which its character must be determined, is the formation of a cast of mind, becoming the gentleman and the Christian, the member of a free and



intellectual society ; it is not the mere imparting of literary knowledge, or studious habits, but that important process by which its strength and energy, its tone and refinement, are given to the whole mental constitution. It is difficult to be expressed in words, but it is that which is generally understood by the terms manliness and taste. The discipline by which this condition is effected, perhaps of all acquirements the most valuable and delightful, is the leading purpose of public education, and can, I conceive, be acquired by no other system. To encourage a spirit of honourable competition, a love of generous pursuits, a tone of social elegance, a high sense of honour, an extensive knowledge of human nature, a schooling of the affections, a courageous independence of mind, an attachment to intellectual grandeur and the glories of past ages ; whatever imparts vigour and loveliness to youth, and ease and dignity to age, is the object of all such establishments. Tried by this standard, Eton will continue to enjoy the pre-eminence it has so long sustained among our public schools. Whatever may be the defects in its system of instruction, in the peculiar excellencies of such an institution, it still stands unrivalled and unapproached. The school owes this acknowledged pre-eminence, to the felicity of its situation, to its large numbers, to the high reputation and social dignity of its scholars, and their enthusiastic attachment to its memory. I shall not be deemed unfairly prejudiced to the scene of

my early affections and pursuits, when I make this assertion. Reverence and gratitude towards the place of his education are the only feelings that can live in the breast of an old Etonian.

Independently of the peculiarities of intellectual culture, by which, in part, these results are produced, which have been already sufficiently discussed, there are other circumstances, of a subordinate nature, in the moral discipline, which deserve a more detailed consideration. On an entrance into the school, with the first expansion of mind and spirit which such an introduction occasions, there immediately commences the influence of a beneficial communication in the present system of fagging. This word need not now excite those feelings of terror which were formerly attached to the practice. I can assert the fact that at Eton, at least, the tyrannical abuse of this custom has entirely ceased. The practice now operates as a protection of the greatest benefit to the younger boys. The defenceless stranger, who is immediately apportioned as a fag to some upper boy of the same house, from that moment acquires a friend interested in his well-being, willing to guide him in his difficulties, and protect him from the aggressions of others. The intercourse thus established, occasions habits of mutual assistance between the strong and the weak, which are often matured into the attachments of friendship. The lower boy may at times be compelled to perform some irksome labour, but the mutual



convenience is so well understood, and the principles of dependence and control are so correctly adjusted, that there arises no painful collision of feeling, and this subordinate discipline is preserved by the common sense of public utility. In the hours of amusement, the river and the cricket-fields are the scenes in which physical habits and tastes of the best kind are encouraged by a spirit of manly emulation; and where a friendly communication is continually increasing its points of contact, by which an important moral benefit is gained, in the tempering of the affections and passions, and the accommodating the selfish principles to the charities of social life. The great variety of innocent amusements afforded by the localities of Eton is, under these views, of essential importance in the discipline of the young mind. The enthusiasm of an old waterman and cricketer may, perhaps, be excused, if he lingers a moment, to celebrate the beauty of the cricket-grounds, and to declare that the Eton water is by far the best among all our inland boat stations, for the exercise of this most noble and delightful and thoroughly English sport. The regulations by which the amusements are controlled, and the boundaries of time and of place determined, are, I believe, of a peculiar kind, but are as effectual as the circumstances will permit. Though they give rise to many inconsistencies and legal fallacies, which are the subject of ordinary ridicule, they are the best that can be devised to unite the greatest possible



indulgence with the most summary and imperative control. Every facility is given for the pursuit of all innocent sports without the college bounds, but on any emergency, or any prospect of danger or excess, the closest confinement can be enforced, and all illicit practices without the walls suppressed. But to leave all minor detail, the general efficacy and force of discipline supported in a school, can be determined by no better criterion than its modes of punishment. The system of flogging, the prime article in the Eton code of penalties, has been at all times largely discussed. These objections have been lately renewed in one of the pamphlets so often referred to, where much is said of its disgrace, its wounding of the feelings, and its consequent impropriety. Even the great name of Locke is brought forward in opposition to the practice. I conceive that on the grounds now urged, the impropriety of this punishment cannot be shown. All punishment is objectionable in itself, and is only admissible as a means of prevention; and therefore the excellence of a punishment must be measured by its probability of deterring from transgression, rather than from any unseemliness connected with its infliction. Flogging is to be supported only because it is, when prudently used, the best means that can be devised for the prevention of delinquencies in boys of an honourable and intelligent mind. The imposition of any extra labour, the loss of place, or confinement, will not operate in such cases as deterring causes,

from their want of anticipative terror. The sense of shame is the only feeling that can be effectually acted upon; the penalty required, is one that involves the feelings of disgrace and self-humiliation, and which can be applied with a sudden and summary infliction. These conditions are found to exist in no punishment but that of flogging, and therefore, indecorous and unseemly as it may appear, it is absolutely necessary as a final and extreme penalty. Locke, in that well known passage, allows its propriety in cases of extremity. I am convinced that by no other means can the master support an adequate discipline, which to be effectual must be accompanied with terrors suited to the subject, and supported by an immediate and impressive execution. Its exclusive efficacy is shown by the want of sufficient discipline in those schools where the practice has been abolished, while by the principles of administration acted upon at Eton, the most perfect system of moral control, that has ever been effected at any similar establishment, is uniformly and universally sustained. The laxity to which I allude may be partly occasioned by other peculiar circumstances, but I have no doubt that it is chiefly to be attributed to the want of such a mode of punishment as can be supplied only by the system of flogging. The evil to be avoided is its too frequent use. The argument urged some time ago by an Edinburgh Reviewer, in favour of its total abolition, is

unanswerable in favour of its rare application, and that on great occasions. "It is an essential requisite," he observes, "of every good punishment, that the pain of it should increase as the number of inflictions increase, or to speak learnedly, that its intensity should vary directly as its quantity." That the direct contrary of this condition results from a repetition of flogging is a common remark. To be properly and efficiently applied it should operate over the whole school as it now operates over the higher classes, as a penalty in reserve for great transgressions<sup>1</sup>. It has perhaps been hitherto too lavishly bestowed among the younger

<sup>1</sup> In the supposed case of an extensive substitution of another punishment for lighter matters, I beg leave to urge the strong objections which hold against the imposition of tasks to be transcribed. I do so the more anxiously, as from the comparatively little trouble the punishment imposes on the master, there is a natural tendency to adopt it; and probably, from this cause, it is now used as the chief, and almost the only penalty, at one of our public schools. It is most important that all punishment should be made a means of improvement, especially where it is intended to correct the faults of indolence and inattention. The practice of rapidly and blindly transcribing or translating long extracts, which the boy does not stop to understand, not only fails to improve, but actually works a material injury on the mind, by increasing its tendencies to carelessness and inattention, and thus confirming into a habit the fault which was to be corrected. It is the remark of Abercrombie, and from such a philosopher it is a pleasure and a pride to learn, that "the practice of setting tasks as punishments cannot be alluded to in terms adequate to its extreme absurdity."



classes ; though it must be considered extremely difficult to substitute any equally efficient punishment in its place ; it is to be hoped, however, that some alteration of this kind will hereafter be made.

While the public attention is thus directed to the improvements required at the hands of the Directors of the School, let it be remembered that corresponding exertions must be demanded of the Parents of the Scholars. Without their strenuous co-operation no exertions of the Master can effect any improvement in the religious principle, or moral training of the boy. I attach the more importance to this remark, because the greatest moral evil now operating at Eton, and which, as I understand, is yearly increasing, to a large amount, arises entirely from the mistaken fondness of the friends of the boys, and is beyond the control of the masters. I allude to the means of indulgence afforded by the large supplies of money received from their homes. Habits of extravagance, and of coarse and sensual gratification are thus formed—a spirit of vicious emulation is sustained, which forces, even those who have no resources of their own, to keep pace with their wealthier school-fellows, at the sacrifice of their principle and the ruin of their peace. Many are led to contract bills, which can be evaded only by the loss of honour ; and all in common acquire tastes and habits of expense which infallibly deteriorate the young mind,

though the means of gratification may be still afforded in after life, but of ruinous consequences when they are unbecoming their rank and resources. By these means a whole corps of idle and worthless persons are retained about the College, who live upon the illicit and immoral indulgences of the scholars. The masters have attempted all the means within their power to put down the evil ; but they have hitherto failed, and can never effect their purpose, while the means of indulgence are so liberally supplied by the parents and friends of the boys. Amidst the praises and grateful acknowledgments which the rational inquirer cannot withhold from the existing institutions of Eton School, he can never forget, or cease to desire, such improvements as are still necessary to advance its system to the possible standard of perfection ; but at the same time he remembers, how much must still depend on the exertions of the friends and families of the scholars, and how essential their co-operation must ever be for the formation of that on which rest all the hopes of society, and all the blessings of religion—a mental constitution, based on conscientious and self-denying principles, the love of truth, and purity of heart.

THE END.

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